



CITY OF DURHAM

Solid Waste Management Department

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www.DurhamNC.gov

**PLEASE READ – YARD WASTE
SERVICE CHANGES EFFECTIVE
JULY 1, 2015**

June 2, 2015

Dear Yard Waste Customer:

You recently received a letter explaining new billing and payment changes impacting yard waste customers. We are following up to better explain why these changes are needed.

- Effective July 1, 2015, customers who currently pay for their service on an annual basis will now pay on a monthly basis on their City water/sewer bill. The change to a monthly billing cycle not only will simplify our billing process, but also helps the City more easily and accurately manage customer accounts. Maintaining two payment cycles was inefficient and caused confusion and billing errors for customers.
- All customers will now pay a \$7.50 all-inclusive monthly rate. The City no longer will charge separately for providing and maintaining carts and for collection service.

Collection costs have increased over the years, including labor, disposal, and equipment. The \$7.50 monthly rate for all customers covers the City's cost to provide this service. While we referred to a "mandatory cart rental fee" in the previous letter, this language did not accurately describe the reason for the change or the outcome we will achieve – to distribute all the costs of the program to our customers on an equal basis.

While some yard waste customers purchased their carts prior to 2008 and paid only for collection, others participating after that time were required to rent a cart in addition to paying a collection charge. Regardless of whether you rented or owned the cart, the City maintained and replaced all carts at no cost, and has done so since 2008. Over time, cart replacement and maintenance costs became a significant expense driven by all of our customers equally, but cart rental customers were the only group paying a special fee for that expense. Charging all of our customers the same rate more accurately reflects the cost to provide this service.

As a reminder, subscribing to yard waste service is an annual commitment, which begins on July 1 and expires the following June 30. Your service will automatically renew on July 1 of each year unless we receive a cancellation request **10 business days prior to July 1**. Once yearly service is established and monthly billing begins, you are responsible for paying for 12 months of service. Exceptions will be made for people moving out of their homes.

We regret any inconvenience this change in billing may cause you, but we believe it is necessary to maintain fairness in how we charge for this optional City service. If you wish to discontinue your service before your annual commitment begins on July 1, contact Durham One Call at (919) 560-1200 by June 17, 2015. If you still have questions, visit our department's Web page at www.DurhamNC.gov for our "Frequently Asked Questions." We look forward to continuing to serve your yard waste collection needs.

Sincerely,

Donald Long
Director